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Christmas

Jesus
becomes a child again
to tell us
that God is not far.
The angels still sing:
Peace to men,
the men he loves.
We ask
this defenseless child — the Almighty
to win over violence
and end its arrogance.
May he remove hatred
from men's hearts
and fill them
with love
so that soon
no nation on earth
will remember
the meaning of war.

Chiara Lubich

33 UNFORGETTABLE DAYS

The initial reaction of most people on hearing the news that Pope John Paul I had died after only 33 days of pontificate was one of shock. One journalist described it in the following terms: "The reaction to this extraordinary event was that of a secularized society no longer used to considering the sense of mystery. When suddenly faced with the inexplicable, people begin to realize how present in history (as well as in Providence) is the mystery, the miracle, the inscrutable sign from heaven which after all coincides with the very mystery of life."

Who of us, witnessing the unexpected death of John Paul I, was not struck by the fleeting quality of life? What believer did not stop to ponder the value of his daily actions; to consider whether these actions were performed with an eternity as a goal, or were instead confined to the limited dimension of things that do not remain? The mystery is contained in this sudden interruption of a pontificate which had begun so joyfully.

From his first appearance on the balcony, the people loved him. There was an instantaneous understanding between him and the crowds. He turned toward them, using the familiar "I" instead of the formal "we" to make himself understood. From the beginning he did not act like one who "reigns." Rather he had the spontaneity of a pastor, of someone who, in his own words, was the pope because he was the bishop of Rome, not the bishop of Rome because he was the pope. His tremendous appeal lays in the certainty that he would have been unable to act differently. This was enough to mark a turning point which will undoubtedly be reflected in the future.

In just 33 days, Pope John Paul I gave an example to the world that showed authority as service. Some likened him to a "pastor" of the whole Church, noting his extraordinary capacity to teach speaking in a way that everyone could understand. He did not talk about the "Church of the Poor," and perhaps he did not even like this expression, which is so often misinterpreted. Yet he was a Pope for the church of the poor, for those who are powerless and dependent, and who are thirsty for the truth, needing someone to explain it to them without the difficult vocabulary of technical theology.

The four Wednesday audiences that Pope John Paul I was able to give became successively more crowded. The last one had to be repeated to accommodate the large number wanting to attend. In those few audiences he left us a complete course on faith, hope and charity, a catechism in the strict sense of the word because he presented the truths of faith using easily understood examples, much the way Jesus used parables of everyday life in Palestine. In his talks John Paul I would quote the saints he loved, novels, popular poets, sayings of his grandmother, even Pinocchio to show how the Gospel can enter the events of daily life.

It is true that 33 days are not sufficient to give a profile of a pope. He did not have time to write an encyclical though he had one in mind which would continue topics treated in Paul VI's encyclical, "The Development of the Peoples." He did not have the time to define the program of his pontificate except for the main points which he outlined in his first talk to the Cardinals. Still, he left an indelible mark on the Church and in the hearts of people.

John Paul I passed like a meteor in the sky of the Church, breaking through the clouds of worries, post-council labors, contrasts and confrontations which had marked the difficult years during which Paul VI served with great wisdom. It was as if he were telling us to celebrate life. He captured us with his optimism and joy, and most of all with his smile. He gave us a taste of an uncomplicated faith, and left us fascinated with his candor. These qualities enabled him to communicate with the very hearts of the people, and were the secret of his impact among sceptics and non-believers.

He had enough time to tell us simply that after the cross there is the Resurrection. A journalist, writing prior to the death of Paul VI, compared the period of Pope John XXIII to the joyful mysteries, the time of Pope Paul VI to the sorrowful mysteries, and speculated that the time of Paul's successor would be the period of the glorious mysteries. Well, the Resurrected Christ did not remain very long with his disciples, but in his brief time with them he filled them with hope, preparing them for the pentecost. Now it has happened to us. A pope, rich in wisdom, has passed leaving us with a new hope. He seemed to remind us of the words of the Gospel, ". . . learn from me for I am meek and humble of heart."

Perhaps the 33 days of his pontificate have prepared the way for a Church completely free from unnecessary formalities and therefore closer to men. His predecessors had already accomplished the difficult task of redefining a modern Church which is increasingly capable of bringing its message to the contemporary world using the language of today. John XXIII called the Second Vatican Council. Paul VI continued with extreme intelligence and wisdom to develop the doctrinal and cultural line which could meet the problems and questions of a changing humanity. It seems that John Paul I had the task of abolishing the last outward appearance of distance between the pope, the bishop of Rome, "President of Charity," and the people, in order to reach an authentic dialogue between the pope and the people of the Church.

John Paul I completed his part. Someone was overheard saying, "It was too beautiful, and on this earth what is too beautiful passes quickly." But we believe that the logic of God is very different from ours, and nothing can be measured by our standards. We are convinced that the 33 days of Pope John Paul I were not only a point of arrival in the evolution of the Church, but also a point of departure.

G. Boselli

n the unforgettable moment of his election, Pope John Paul I appeared on the alcony to bestow his first Papal blessing on the enthusiastic crowd gathered in St. eter's Square.

August 26th - September 29th

We have summarized the brief and ascinating story of John Paul I quoting xcerpts of his unforgettable talks.

August 26, 1978. The smoke left everyone perplexed: was it black or white? Finally there was no doubt. It was definitely white, and Paul VI had a successor. The papal election had been one of the shortest in history. Cardinal Felici came to the central balcony in St. Peter's and announced to the world that the Church had as its new pope Albino Cardinal Luciani. The crowd assembled in St. Peter's Square burst into endless applause. For the first time, the newly elected pope, former Patriarch of Venice chose two names: John Paul I.

August 27, 1978. At noon the Pope appeared at the balcony. He smiled, and it was the genuine and open smile of a person whose heart is close to heaven. As soon as he started talking the crowd was captivated. "Yesterday morning I walked tranquilly to the Sistine Chapel to vote..." He spoke in an informal way about what had happened to him. It was like the brief and accurate account of a reporter who had unexpectedly found himself personally involved in what he was describing. "Never for a moment did I imagine what would happen," he continued, revealing his own feelings, "As soon as the danger began to form around me, two colleagues seated next to me whispered words of encouragement."

Then he went on to describe the reasons for the choice of his name, "I thought for a little bit and reasoned in this way: Pope John XXIII consecrated me here in this very basilica with his own hands. Then I happened to become his successor in Venice, a city full of his memory." Pope Paul VI had made him a cardinal, he explained. Therefore, out of gratitude to the two popes, he chose to be called John Paul. "I don't have the wisdom of heart which Pope John had; nor do I have the preparation or education of Pope Paul VI;" he added, "but I have their job, and I must seek to serve the Church."

"I hope you will help with your prayers," he concluded.

In this way, Pope John Paul I won Rome's heart and the heart of the world.

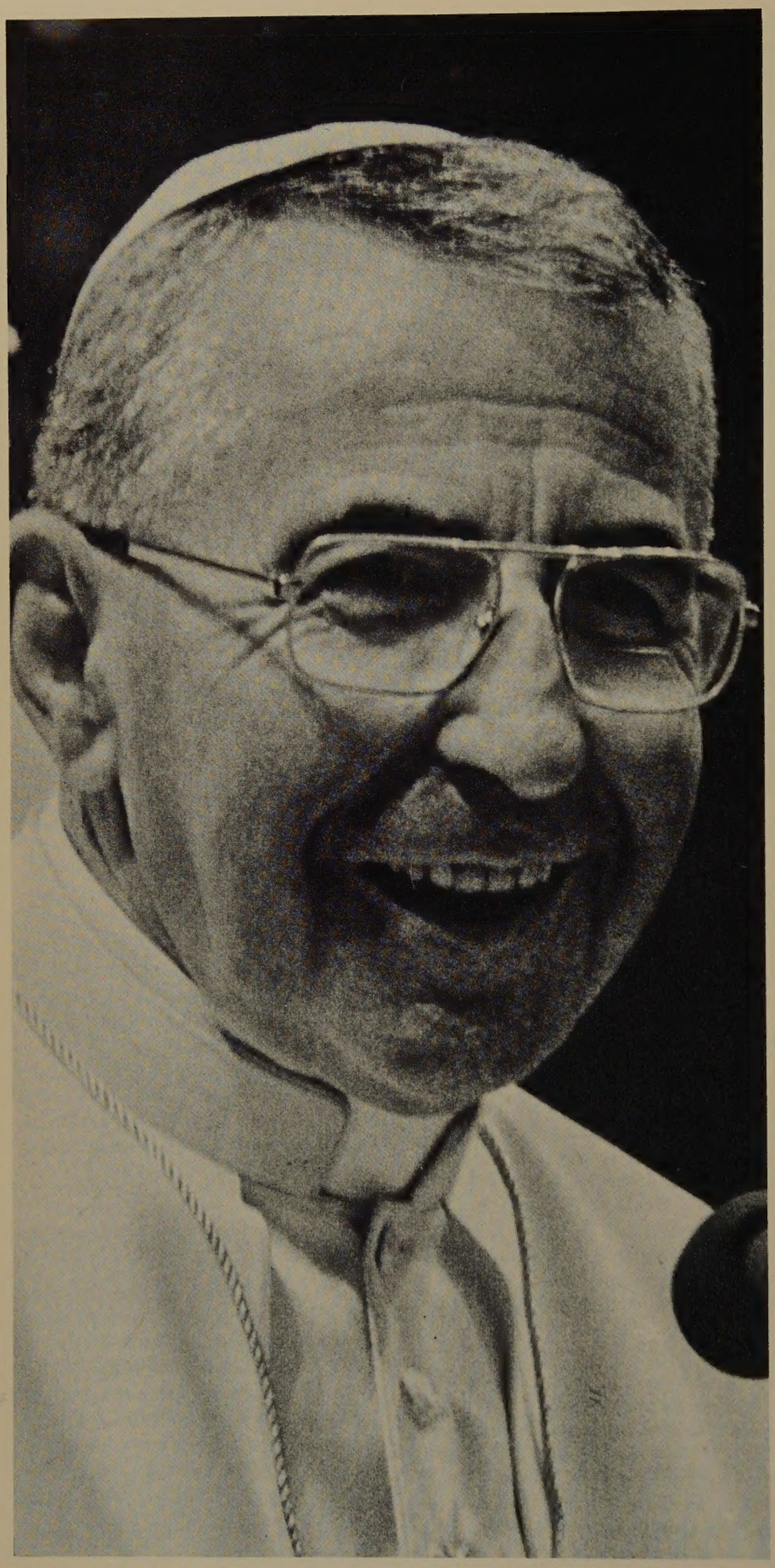
Two hours earlier, in his first radio message which was broadcast throughout the world, Pope John Paul had already committed himself to continuing the work of John XXIII and Paul VI. He had said, "We wish to continue to put into effect the heritage of the Second Vatican Council,... to preserve the integrity of the great discipline of the Church ... to remind the entire Church that its first duty is that of evangelization... We wish to continue the ecumenical thrust... to pursue with patience but firmness that serene and constructive dialogue even with those who do not share our faith."

August 28, 1978. Cardinal Hoeffner revealed that the first words uttered by Cardinal Luciani when he was elected pope were, "May God forgive you for what you have done to me!"

Also on this day news spread that the pope did not want to be crowned, and that there would be only a simple liturgical ceremony. The last formal sign of earthly power was disappearing.

August 29, 1978. The Holy See gave further information about the solemn Mass which would mark the beginning of the Pope's ministry. It was said that the Pope would walk to the altar in St. Peter's Square, and also return from it on foot. Therefore, also the portable throne was to be abolished.

August 30, 1978. John Paul I received in audience (he preferred to call it a meeting) the members of the Sacred College of Cardinals.



He declared to be comforted in his responsibility by their "loving and sincere support," and he added, "In this, we experience that same response by all the Bishops of the world united to this Apostolic See with the strong bond of one communion. This unity transcends space, ignores racial difference and enriches us with the true values present in diverse cultures. Though peoples differ in geographical location, in language and mentality, through this one communion, they become a single great family... It is for this unity that we know we have been established both as a sign and as an instrument."

August 31, 1978. The Pope received the Diplomatic Corps accredited to the Holy See. He spoke to them in fluent French, "Our possibilities for diplomatic interventions are limited and of a special character. They do not interfere with purely temporal, technical and political affairs, which are matters for your Governments. In this way, our diplomatic missions to your highest civil authorities, far from being a survival from the past, are a witness to our deep-seated respect for lawful temporal power, and to our lively interest in the humane causes that the temporal power is intended to advance."

He continued by describing how the Holy See could act, "If invited, the Holy See can participate at the level of your Governments or of international entities, in the search for better solutions to the great problems at stake, such as disarmament, peace, justice, humanitarian measures and aid, development, etc."

September 1, 1978. The Pope received about 1,000 journalists, photographers and camera men of the international press.

He promised "a special concern for a frank, honest and effective working together with the communications media." And he added, "It is a promise that we willingly make, realizing that the means of social communication assume in the life of modern man a function that becomes ever more important. We are mindful of the risks of "massing" and "levelling" that the "mass media" contain, the consequent threats to the interiority of the individual, to his capacity for personal reflection, and to his objectivity in judgment. But we also are aware of the new and joyous possibility

. Peter's Square.
op: the crowd greeting the newly elected Pope, John Paul I.
bove: A countless number of people waited in line to pay their respects to ope John Paul I, who lay in state in Vatican City from September 29 to ctober 4.

at they offer to the man of today — e possibility of better knowing and of awing closer together, the possibility more closely understanding the desire r justice, for peace, for brotherhood, deed for building up with one another eeper bonds of sharing, of understand-g, of solidarity in view of a more just d humane world. We know, in a ord, the ideal goal towards which each you, despite difficulties and illusions, rect your own energy. You wish to ar-ve through 'communication' at a true d satisfying 'communion'. As you ell know, this is the goal towards nich the heart of Christ aspires."

He continued recommending to them at they speak about the Church and the Pope with "a love of truth and with respect for human dignity, because such is the scope of every social communication."

September 2, 1978. Kings, queens, heads of state, prime ministers and diplomats began to arrive in Rome for the Mass of the following day which would take the place of the traditional crowning.

September 3, 1978. Rome was very beautiful that late afternoon. Small clouds in a blue sky, a cool breeze, and bells ringing all over. The Pope came out of St. Peter's preceded by a small group of altar boys, like the good pastor of a country church. Cardinals and bishops were waiting for the Mass, and he differed from them only because of his gold miter. The picture of a 1000 year old tradition was completely changed. No crowning took place. The pope received only the "pallio" (the traditional woolen stole given to the bishop of Rome). In the sermon he said, "we begin our service sustained by your prayers."

September 4, 1978. The Pope received the 131 heads of the Official Missions present at the ceremony held the day before at St. Peter's. He talked to them in French, thanking them for the esteem and trust that the people in their countries have for the Church. "This homage of so many nations is very fine and very encouraging. Not that our person deserved it: yesterday we were only a priest and a bishop of an Italian province, dedicating all our strength and talents to the apostolate entrusted to us. And now, today, we are called to the See of the Apostle Peter."

Later on in the talk he said, "Certainly, we do not have miracle solutions for the great, world problems. We can, however, bring something very precious: a spirit which helps to unravel these problems and sets them along the course which is essential, that of universal charity and openness to transcendent values, that is, an openness to God."

Before concluding, he found a way to approach a delicate subject, "We hope, in the first place," he said, "that Christian communities will always enjoy, in your country, the respect and freedom to which every religious conscience is entitled, and that their contribution in the pursuit of the common good will be given a just place."

September 6, 1978. Opening his first general audience, the Holy Father addressed the thousands upon thousands of people coming from all over the world. "On my right and on my left there are Cardinals and Bishops, my brothers in the episcopate. I am only their elder brother."

He continued, giving his first catechism lesson. He invited a child to converse with him as he used to do when he was bishop and, later, Patriarch of Venice.

In the Angelus message on the same day, the Pope mentioned the Camp David Summit talks which were just beginning: "Now, if you permit, I should

like to invite you to join me in prayer for an intention that I have much at heart. You have learned from the press, from television, that today at Camp David an important meeting begins between the rulers of Egypt, Israel and the United States, in the hope of finding a solution to the conflict in the Middle East. This conflict, which for more than 30 years has been continued on the land of Jesus, has already caused so many victims, so much suffering..."

September 7, 1978. The Pope met the Roman Clergy for the first time. He began by saying, "allow me to talk to you...with brotherly familiarity."

Then he spoke about the discipline of the Church. "There is the 'little discipline,' which is limited to purely external and formal observance of juridical norms. I would like, on the contrary, to speak of the 'great discipline.' The latter exists only if external observance is the fruit of deep convictions and the free and joyful projection of a life lived deeply with God."

He went on to say, "And today it is the desire of many good faithful to feel their priest habitually united with God."

Finally, he also stressed that St. Gregory the Great reasoned in a similar way. "He hoped that the pastor of souls would dialogue with God without forgetting men, and dialogue with men without forgetting God."

September 10, 1978. At the Angelus, he spoke from his window to the huge crowd gathered in St. Peter's, mentioning again the Camp David talks. "All men are hungry and thirsty for peace, especially the poor, who pay more and suffer more in troubled times and in wars."

He was impressed by the fact that the three presidents, Carter (Christian), Begin (Jewish) and Sadat (Muslim) publicly expressed their hopes in prayer. He said, "We know that God has always his eyes open on us, even when it seems to be dark. He is our father, even more he is our mother. He does not want to hurt us. He wants only to do good to us, to all of us."

His statement sounded absolutely new, revolutionary, even sensational. The reporters made note of it and made urgent telephone calls to experts in religious matters, questioning its implications. In the following days, their commentary filled numerous front-page newspaper columns.

(continued on page 10)

Albino Cardinal Luciani, then Patriarch of Venice, visited the Mariapolis being held at Belluno, Italy from July 8th to the 13th. This visit took place only a few weeks before his election as Pope. The following are his words to all the participants.

"I have been paying close attention to everything, and it has all pleased me. I don't know if I can add anything to what has already been said. The last speaker, referring to the participants in the Mariapolis, said, 'We feel that Mary is really our mother.' Let me repeat with St. Ambrose that she is not only our mother, but our sister as well. She experienced a great deal of what we ourselves are experiencing.

"At the Council, we said that Mary lived a life of sacrifice, a life made up of domestic concerns and work. Now this fact gives us great courage. . . She became a saint, the greatest of all saints, and yet it is not known that she performed a single miracle while living; we only know of the ordinary things she did. Therefore, this must be our guideline: to become saints through the ordinary everyday things we do, not by extraordinary things. It is the way we do things that must be extraordinary.

"One of the women who spoke earlier mentioned her child who, after meeting Chiara Lubich, said, 'She told me to obey my mother and father.' 'No, she didn't. She only shook your hand,' corrected her mother. 'But it was the way she shook my hand!' exclaimed the child. These are things which happen among children.

"Do you get the point? What matters is the way in which things are done. The Lord does not only ask that we do certain things; it is the love with which we do them that counts. St. Francis de Sales, whom I always read, (I think that there are some Salesians here today), wrote: 'Jesus Christ redeemed us with great suffering, yet it is not his suffering, but rather, the love with which he suffered that is important.' Therefore, let us try to put a lot of love into the ordinary things that we do each day.

"Regarding the film (1) of Chiara Lubich, we heard her speaking about the Church. The Church is the continuation of Christ. St. Paul understood this when he was struck by lightning on the way to Damascus. When he heard the words, 'Paul why are you persecuting me?' 'Me? I am surely not persecuting him. I am persecuting the Christians!' he must have thought.

"Therefore we must recognize that the Church is the continuation of Christ. This is not true of the hierarchy alone. It is we who continue Christ. We are the body and he is the head. He lives today through us and this gives us great worth.

"At the Council, we dedicated the fourth chapter of 'Lumen Gentium' (2) to the priesthood of the laity. A lay person, simply because he has been baptized, has tremendous dignity. When I saw the Sisters here I thought, 'These are good sisters who have taken their vows. But remember that the baptism you received is much more important than your consecration. In your religious consecration you consecrated yourselves, but in Baptism, Jesus himself consecrated you. This means that we have great worth. We must feel that we are truly an important people, because we are continuing the life of Christ.

"Mention was made of Peter and of the hierarchy. I especially liked the fact

1) Film entitled "The Rock," one of a series of talks on the presence of Christ in the hierarchy of the Church, which were recently published by New City Press in the book **Servants of All.**
2) Dogmatic Constitution of the Church included in the Documents of Vatican II.

Chiara Lubich stressed that Peter a poor sinner. I always preach this he poor: remember that the focal it of Christianity is God who loves He who has not understood this has understood Christianity. And I add this love is not only alive, it is uning. It is a love that never gives up. n if I sin and go away from him, he after me. This must be understood ny cost, otherwise we do not underd Christianity.

'Jesus is someone who loves us. One ou from Portugal said that we must wer his love, and she answered it genusly by consecrating her life to him. even those who are married must wer it, because at the Council we this too, marriage is not an obstacle sanctification. It is a step leading to ctity.

'Certainly, those who enter the con- and take vows are helped by their mmunity. They receive a great deal of . There are however many married ple who have also become saints.

'I am here in Belluno. I had a good her who was educated by the Sisters. of the first books she gave me was *atise on the Love of God*, by St. ncis de Sales. I always loved St. ncis. I read and re-read his writings I like them. He has said that lay ple must become saints.

'When I became a priest I bought a nch edition of all his works. I re-read *atise on the Love of God.* A certain sage which appeared there was not in book my mother had given me, ch has a version edited for children. did not contain two chapters, one of ch was entitled, "Sanctification in rimony." St. Francis was a saint understood that marriage can truly to sanctity.

"Regarding the hierarchy, I was say- that I liked the fact that St. Peter presented with his defects. This is at the Lord wanted. Yes, Peter was 'rock'. He was the head of the rch, but he was also a poor sinner. s was a sign that after him we would e some popes, bishops and priests would make mistakes, and we uld have to bear with them just the e.

"There are many defects in the Church, historic defects, but we must love it just the same. I remember reading that in Hyde Park, London, a park where everyone can speak his mind, a Dominican priest began speaking about the Church. Someone raised his hand: 'Excuse me, Father,' he said, 'but don't go on telling me these stories! I know how it really is. There have been some popes and bishops, and even today there are Christians, Catholics, who betray their spouses, who make loads of money and mock the poor. I cannot accept a Church like this!'

"The priest said, 'Excuse me, but may I make one observation? If I'm not mistaken, isn't the collar of your shirt a little dirty?'

"'Yes. I have been wearing it for nearly a week,' the man replied.

"'One more question. Is it dirty because you washed it with soap, or because you haven't washed it?' the Dominican inquired.

"'I haven't washed it,' was the reply.

"'It is the same with the Catholic Church,' continued the priest. 'There is soap; there is the Gospel and there are the sacraments. Those who use this soap, who read and live the Gospel, are cleansed. Yet there are others who have the soap and don't use it and then the things like you mentioned take place. . .'

"I particularly admire Chiara's passion for the Church. It is truly a *passion* for the Church. I have noted this passion for the Church in many saints, and also in great writers. Bernanos, a great French author, wrote, 'I love the Church just as it is. If tomorrow I were to find myself outside of the Church by chance, I would not remain there for even five minutes. Even if I had to get down on my knees, and crawl on all fours, I would do everything possible to get back in.'

"Clerissaque, a great Dominican writer, said that when it comes to the Church, one must be ready not only to suffer *for* the Church but also *because* of the Church. . .

"I remember something written by Father Primo Mazzolari. When I was still young, Mazzolari published the periodical called "*Adesso*" (Now). Cardinal Schuster said, "*Adesso*" cannot be published any longer. The Holy See does not want it to be printed.' Mazzolari, who loved the Church, answered, "*Adesso*" is but a moment and the Church is eternal. "*Adesso*" may pass, but eternity should remain.'

"These are the words of true Christians."

Referring to an experience that he had just heard, the story of a recent graduate who had been a Marxist, Cardinal Luciani emphasized: "We must think of the youth. Paul VI said, 'The young people must save the youth. . .' My appeal is that it is not enough for us to become good. God gave us enthusiasm and many other gifts, we must put them to work to make others good."

(continued from page 8)

September 13, 1978. 17,000 people attended the public audience. They were coming from all over the world to hear him but especially, to see him. In response to their desire, the Holy Father decided to use the portable chair. This news, announced over the loudspeakers, provoked relief and applause.

The Pope continued his "Catechism lessons." On this occasion he spoke about faith. He also replied to all the speculations of the press regarding "his" conception of God as a mother. He explained that he had not invented that concept, nor had he intended to start a theological revolution. The concept is a very ancient one.

He said, "It is also difficult to accept some truths, because the truths of faith are of two kinds; some pleasant, others unpalatable to our spirit. For example, it is pleasant to hear that God has so much tenderness for us, even more than a mother has for her children, as Isaiah says."

September 17, 1978. The crowd was larger than ever for the Sunday Angelus. Pope John Paul spoke to the young people who were about to return to school. "I would like to remind the pupils of the primary school of their friend Pinocchio; not the one who played truant one day to go and see the puppets, but the other one, the Pinocchio who took a liking to school, to such an extent that every day, for the whole academic year, he was the first to enter the classroom and the last to leave it.

"My most affectionate wishes, however, go to pupils of the secondary schools, especially the senior ones... The Pope too, was a pupil of these schools: junior high school, senior high school, university. But I was thinking only of youth and the parish. No one came to tell me, 'You will become pope!' Oh! If only they told me, I would have studied more. I would have prepared myself. Now, on the contrary, I am old, there is no time."

September 20, 1978. A new general audience, a new catechism lesson - this time on hope: "Today I will speak to you of this virtue, which is obligatory for every Christian.

"I said that hope is obligatory: that does not mean that hope is ugly or hard. On the contrary, anyone who lives it travels in an atmosphere of trust and abandonment, saying with the psalmist, 'Lord, you are my rock, my shield, my fortress, my refuge, my lamp, my shepherd, my salvation. Even if an army were to encamp against me, my heart will not fear; and if the battle rises against me, even then I am confident.'

"You will say, is not this psalmist exaggeratedly enthusiastic? Is it possible that things always went right for him? No, they did not always go right. He, too, knows, and says so, that the bad are often fortunate and the good oppressed. He even complained to the Lord about it sometimes; he went so far as to say, 'Why are you sleeping, Lord? Why are you silent? Wake up, listen to me, Lord!' But his hope remained: firm, unshakeable. To him and to all those who hope can be applied what St. Paul said of Abraham, 'In hope he believed against hope' (Rom 4:18)."

September 21, 1978. The Pope received a group of American Bishops. Speaking in English about the Christian family, he defined it as a "community of love." He went on to say that it is the responsibility of parents to deepen their children's love for God, strengthening them by bearing witness to their own faith. He called this the highest form of apostolate of the twentieth century, and said that the "domestic Church," realized through prayer, is contributing to the transformation of the world.

September 23, 1978. For the first time, Pope John Paul left the Vatican City, taking possession of his basilica, the Cathedral of St. John Lateran in Rome. There, too, the crowd was immense and enthusiastic.

In his homily, he emphasized that "Everyone knows that the Pope acquires authority over the whole Church inasmuch as he is Bishop of Rome." He spoke of his own responsibilities and that of the Romans, saying, "Shall the pilgrims find here a model of a true Christian community?"

A few minutes before, Dr. Argan, the Mayor of Rome, had greeted him. The Pope commented, "Some words of his caused me to think of one of the prayers that I recited as a child with Mamma. It went like this: 'the sins that cry for vengeance in the presence of God are...to oppress the poor, to defraud the workers of a just wage.' In his turn, the parish priest questioned me at school on the Catechism, 'Why are the sins that cry for vengeance in the presence of God among the more grievous and harmful?' Reply: 'Because they are directly contrary to the good of mankind and are most hateful inasmuch as, more than others, they provoke the chastisements of God' (Cathechism of Pius X, n.154). Rome will be a true Christian community if God is honored by you not merely with a multitude of the faithful in the churches, not merely with private life that is lived morally, but also with love for the poor."

September 27, 1978. The crowd gathered for the fourth general audience on Wednesday was so large that not all could fit into the hall at once. First, Pope John Paul greeted the German pilgrims, and later held an audience for all the others. "We must make progress in love," was the theme of his fourth Catechism lesson. Also this time, he called for a child to "help" him, and told him at the end, "Remember that in this life we all feel a great desire to go ahead, but we must do it with love..."

Some sick people were also present in the hall and to them he said, 'Be aware that the Pope who speaks to you has been in the hospital eight times, and has had four operations."

September 28, 1978. Pope John Paul I received a group of Bishops from the Philippines. His talk, which he delivered in English, dealt with the challenge of evangelization. Prompted by his own love for the means of mass communication, he underlined the importance of carrying out the apostolate through Radio Veritas, a precious instrument for the spreading of the Gospel in the Far East.

September 29, 1978. At 7:30 the radio broadcast the news of Pope John Paul's death. He had been found in his bed at 5:30 A.M., with the light on, like one who was intent on reading some notes. According to his doctors, he died of a heart attack at about 11:00 P.M. the night before.

Two hours before his death, one of his secretaries had told him of a young man who had just been killed in Rome. The Pope had become pale and had murmured, "Even young people kill one another..."

Gino Lubich

JOHN PAUL II

y Guglielmo Bosell:

When the incredible news of the death of Pope John Paul I spread throughout the world many people wondered, "What will happen now? What is God now asking of his Church?" The answer of the Holy Spirit put an end to all the speculation of journalists and experts and signaled a swift change "... in the course of life and history," as the Holy Father himself said.

As an Italian journalist wrote: "Considering our world in which the potential for renewal seems extremely limited and in which the possibility for originality and imagination has been reduced to a minimum, the election of Cardinal Wojtyla as Supreme Pontiff shows that the Church is the most youthful of all existing institutions — in spite of the fact that it is 2000 years old." This comment coming as it did from a layman, effectively conveys the startling yet fascinating impression created by the election of a non-Italian pope for the first time in 455 years.

The time was ripe for such a change. The way had been prepared by the work of the two previous pontiffs, by the Second Vatican Council, by the universality of the College of Cardinals — an accomplishment of Pope Paul VI — and by the presence of a native Catholic Hierarchy which now exists all over the world. The Roman people were also ready to welcome a non-Italian as their bishop and the exceptional way in which they greeted him was proof of this fact. The immense crowd at St. Peter's Square, the warm dialogue which went beyond words, the immediate mutual understanding in spite of the difficulties of the language, and the endless applause welcoming the pope "who comes from a distant land," were all signs that the people understood that this event was a great step forward, an historical occasion.

At once they felt at ease with the new, 58 year old pontiff who appears to be someone who is both sincere and congenial, who is accustomed to direct contact with people and nature, an informal person who possesses the straightforward character of a working man.

One of his first actions after being elected pope was to go to a hospital in Rome in spite of the danger posed by the enthusiastic crowds awaiting him there, to visit a Polish bishop who was ill. There he showed how he can meet others on a person to person basis. He also revealed his great love for those who suffer. "We were very close friends," he told the patients, doctors and nurses. "As a bishop he is my colleague, but above all he is a sincere and dear friend of mine." Speaking to the patients, he then expressed the way in which he regards suffering. "You are powerful," he said, "just as Jesus was powerful, because they crucified him." He then added a note of humor. "I want to thank the doctors, Sisters, chaplains and nurses, and those who protected me as well, because due to the great enthusiasm of the crowds there really was a chance that I, myself, might have had to remain here in this hospital!"

Cardinal Wojtyla, then Archbishop of Cracow arriving at Fiumicino Airport in Rome, shortly before becoming Pope John Paul II.
In choosing the name of John Paul II, he conveyed his desire to continue the work of his predecessors.

As he was about to leave he added, "Excuse me. They have reminded me that I have to bless you." And then, with a smile, "They are teaching me how to be a pope."

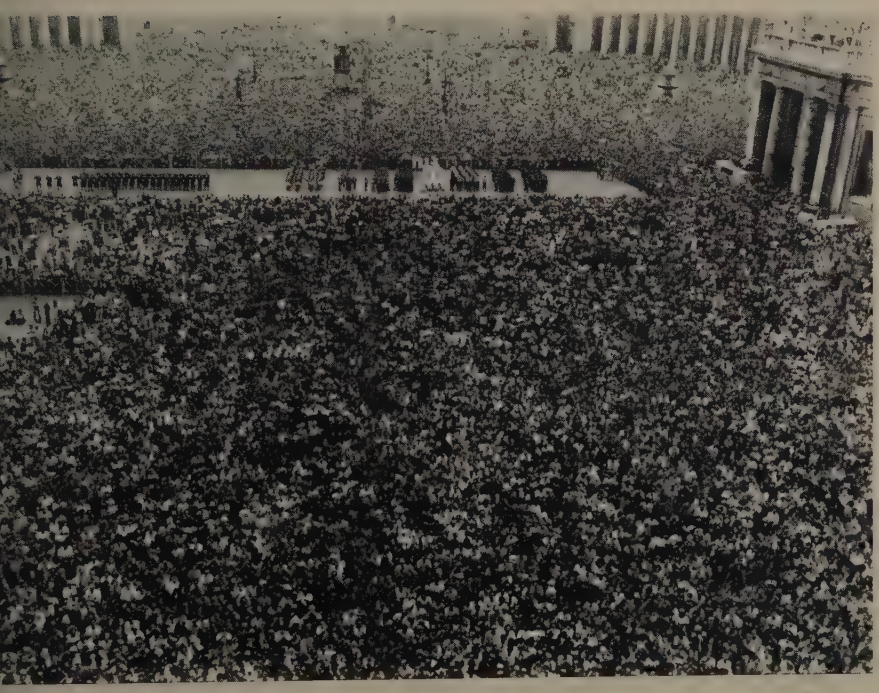
It is this — the fullness of his humanity, enriched by his deep holiness — which has captured the hearts of the people. It is difficult to find someone who combines, as he does, these two qualities which often war with one another; a broad cultural background — theological, ecclesiastical, philosophical and sociological — and pastoral sensitivity — the ability to deal with people in a frank and open manner. He is convinced that the message of Salvation cannot be conveyed effectively unless there is constant contact with people. One could say that he possesses both the great intellectual qualities of Pope Paul VI and the pastoral ones of Pope John XXIII and Pope John Paul I.

In choosing the name of John Paul II, Pope Wojtyla conveyed his desire to continue the work already begun by his two predecessors. Now he will contribute the mark of his own character, one formed in extremely trying circumstances, as a bishop in a nation behind the Iron Curtain.

It seems too soon to be speaking about the course which Pope John Paul II will follow during his pontificate. He himself has said it. But the remarks which he made in his talk to the cardinals give us the possibility, even now, to take what he is saying and doing and make it our own, to live as actively involved Christians who are making a contribution to his mission of evangelization.

First of all he made a formal commitment clearly and vigorously affirming his intention to be faithful to the reforms of the Second Vatican Council.

ednesday, October 13.
ohn Paul II left the Vatican, for the first time as Pope to visit a Polish Bishop the Gemelli Hospital in Rome. He said: "As a bishop he is my colleague, ut above all he is a sincere and dear friend of mine."



He, who had made an important contribution to the work of the Council while in the Bishop's Synod, called it: "a milestone in the almost two thousand year history of the Church," and said, "we are bound by the primary duty of most diligently furthering the implementation of the decrees and directive norms of that same Universal Synod. This indeed we shall do in a way that is at once prudent and stimulating. We shall strive, in particular, that first of all an appropriate mentality may flourish."

This is a factor which concerns everyone. And he called for a spirit of cooperation among all when he said, "...outlooks must be at one with the Council so that in practice those things may be done that were ordered by it, and that those things which lie hidden in it or — as it is usually said — are 'implicit' may become explicit in the light of the experiments made since then and the demands of changing circumstances."

In the explanation that follows, the dynamic viewpoint of the Pope comes into relief: "Briefly, it is necessary that the fertile seeds which the Fathers of the Ecumenical Synod, nourished by the word of God, sowed in good ground (cf. Mt. 13:8, 23) -- that is, the important teachings and pastoral deliberations -- should be brought to maturity."

In promoting the enactment of the Council's recommendations, the Pope put into relief the doctrine on the existence, constitution and characteristics of the Church. He stressed the necessity of our giving attention to what he called the "Magna Carta" of the Council, that is the Dogmatic Constitution, "Lumen Gentium." "...it is necessary for us to take it once again into our hands he said, "so that with renewed and invigorating zeal we may meditate on the nature and function of the Church, its way of being and acting. This should be done not merely in order that the vital communion in Christ of all who believe and hope in him should be accomplished, but also in order to contribute to bringing about a fuller and closer unity of the whole human family."

Another significant point, one given great importance by the Pope, was the "collegiality of bishops with Peter and under Peter." He then spoke about "the appropriate development of institutes — some new, some updated," drawing special attention to the Synod of Bishops, established "by that very talented man, Paul VI."

THE FOCOLARE MOVEMENT TO JOHN PAUL II

Immediately following the election of Karol Cardinal Wojtyla to the Supreme Pontificate, Chiara Lubich, expressing the sentiments of all the members of the Focolare Movement, sent him the following telegram:

Rocca di Papa

October 17, 1978

To His Holiness John Paul II

With heart-felt gratitude to God and Mary, the Most Blessed Mother of the Church, the Focolare Movement, spread throughout the world, welcomed with exultation the news of the election of Your Holiness as the Supreme Pontiff of the Church. It expresses its deepest wishes that during your Pontificate the Church may achieve the greatest unity and that Christians may all re-unite around the Vicar of Christ. It prays that the testimony of all Christians in the world, under your guidance, will lead innumerable faithful of other religions and men of good will to Christ.

It assures you of its unconditional faithfulness and implores your Apostolic Blessing on all its work.

Your most devoted daughter,

Chiara Lubich

In his talk he also emphasized faithfulness; the faithfulness of the Pope to his mission of preserving intact the deposit of faith, strengthening his brothers, and of being pastor of the whole Church.

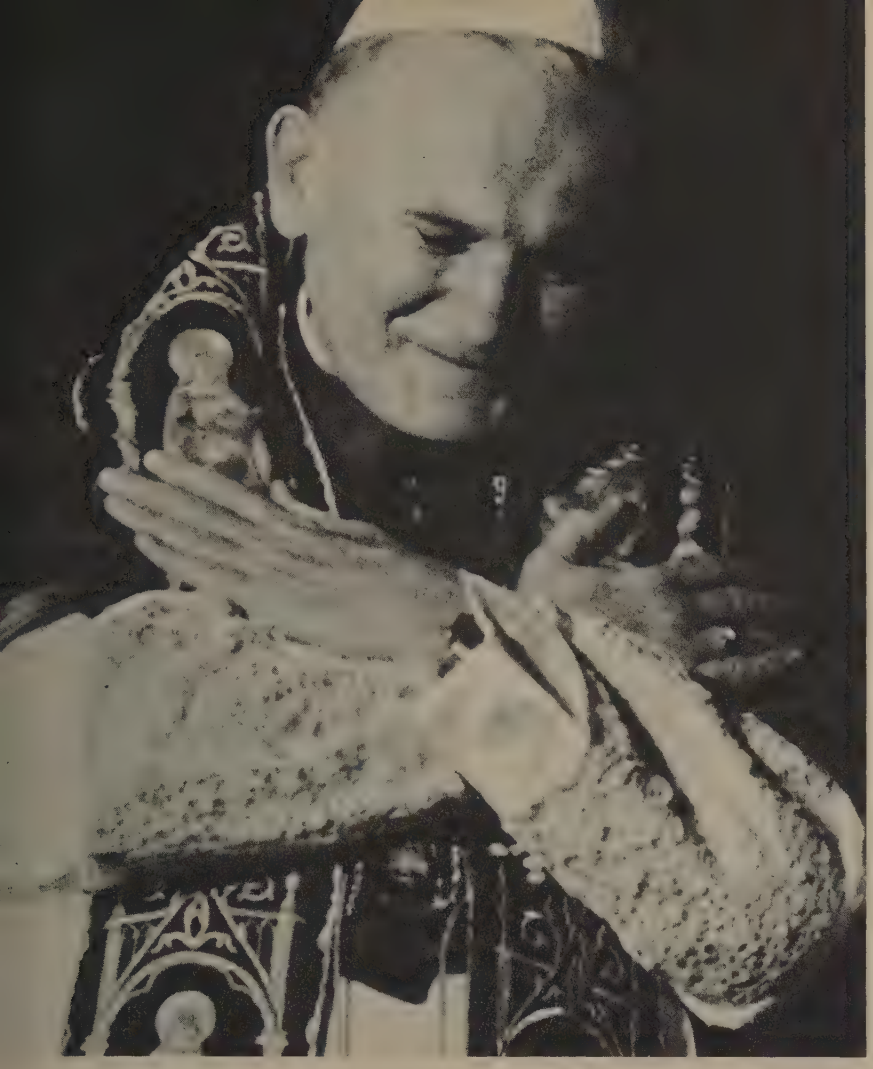
Pope John Paul II asked that everyone be faithful to the truths of the Catholic faith and also to the liturgical norms laid down by the ecclesiastical Authority. "Fidelity also concerns the great discipline of the Church of which our immediate predecessor spoke. This discipline is not of such a kind that it depresses or, as they say, degrades. It seeks to safeguard the right ordering of the mystical body of Christ with the result that all the members of which it is composed, united together perform their duties in a normal and natural way. Moreover, fidelity signifies the fulfillment of the demands of the priestly and religious vocation in such a way that what has freely been promised to God will always be carried out in so far as life is understood in a stable supernatural way."

In short, Pope John Paul II intends to implement all of the teachings of the Council. He is inviting us to recognize the futility of empty protest and to faithfully participate instead in the life of a Church which is both united and full of life.

As a Cardinal, Pope John Paul II demonstrated his knowledgeable commitment to ecumenism. He also wanted to mention ecumenism as an important point of the program of his pontificate, "How often do we meditate together on the last wish of Christ who asked the Father for the gift of unity for the disciples, (cf. John 17:21-23)? Who does not remember how much Saint Paul stressed the unity of the spirit from which the followers of Christ might have the same love, being of one accord, of one mind" (cf. Phil 2:2,5-8)? Therefore one can hardly believe that a deplorable division still exists among Christians. This is a cause of embarassment and perhaps of scandal to others. And so we wish to proceed along the road which has happily been opened and to encourage whatever can serve to remove the obstacles, desirous as we are, that through common effort full communion may eventually be achieved."

Reaching the conclusion of his talk to the Cardinals and the world, John Paul II addressed his thoughts to all men: "We turn also to all men who as children of almighty God are our brothers whom we must love and serve, to make known to them without any sense of boasting but with sincere humility our intention to really devote ourself to the continual and special cause of peace, of development and justice among nations. In this matter we have no desire to interfere in politics or to take part in the management of temporal affairs. For just as the Church cannot be confined to a certain earthly pattern, so we in our approach to the urgent questions of men and peoples, are led solely by religious and moral motives."

And again the pope specified his particular concern: "We wish to extend our hand to all peoples and all men at this moment and to open our heart to all who are oppressed, as they say, by any injustice or discrimination with regard to either economic or social affairs, or even to political matters, or even to freedom of conscience and the freedom to practice their religion which is their due. We must aim at this: that all forms of injustice, which exist today, should be given consideration by all in common and should be really eradicated from the



rld, so that all men may be able to
e a life worthy of man."
Pope John Paul II is broad-minded
l, eager for dialogue, he possesses the
urage to pursue new prospects in all
ds, while, at the same time, he is firm
regard to doctrine and discipline.
ese elements indicate that his pontif-
te will be one of consolidation, unity,
h new developments in dialogue; and
s dialogue will be effective inasmuch
its "firmness" remains. Today, those
o are "open" often cannot under-
nd "faithfulness," whereas those who
"faithful" cannot understand "open-
s." Yet these two qualities can be
ly fruitful only if they exist simul-
eously.

We will see many new things with
s pope, as well as great solidity and
pect for tradition. He possesses the
tleness of one who grew up under
influence of Our Lady of Czesto-
owa. The fact that he has been
urished by a deep and ardent devo-
n to Mary has a great effect on the
y in which he acts. His splendid and simple statement to the crowds in St. Peter's Square testifies to this. "I was afraid to accept the appointment, but I did it in a spirit of obedience to Our Lord and with total trust in his Mother, our most holy Lady."

It can also be seen in the heart-felt words which he spoke to the Cardinals. They were the words of one who lives in this reality every day. "In this grave hour which gives rise to trepidation, we cannot do other than turn our mind with filial devotion to the Virgin Mary, who always lives and acts as a Mother in the mystery of Christ, and repeat the words 'Totus tuus' (all thine) which we inscribed in our heart and on our coat of arms twenty years ago on the day of our episcopal ordination."

In words which reveal a deep and abiding relationship with God, he explained how he intends to carry out his ministry: "We are also convinced that this high office must always be related to love as the source from which it is nourished and as it were the climate in which it can be expanded.. because we want our ministry to be from the outset a ministry of love, and want to show and declare this in every possible way."

He wants to follow the example of Paul VI who preached "the Civilization of Love," and of John Paul I who gave forth "an abundant outpouring of love... in the few days of his ministry."

With immense love and joy, we feel that we are with him in the unity which he has called the central purpose of Christian witness. In this spirit, we want to cry with all our heart, "Long live Pope John Paul II!" ●

Left: Monday, October 16. Pope John Paul II had just given his first greeting to the people from the balcony of the 'blessings' in St. Peter's Square. He seems to want to heartfully embrace the hundreds of thousands of people gathered to welcome the new pope.

WORD OF LIFE

Have you noticed that often your life drags on because you don't live it fully but wait for the future in anticipation of something beautiful to come?

In fact, there is a "beautiful future" to come but it is not the one you expect.

A divine instinct leads you to look forward to something or somebody that may satisfy you. You live for a holiday celebration, a vacation, a particular encounter but then when everything is over you are not satisfied or not fully satisfied. You start the routine of your life again without conviction, always in anticipation of a better future.

The truth is that among the many elements in one's life there is one that no one, including you, can escape — the meeting with the Lord who will come.

This is the "beautiful future" toward which you unconsciously tend, because you are made for happiness, and only God can give you full happiness.

Jesus knows how you and I search for it blindly; therefore, he reminds us, "keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come" (Mt. 24:42).

With these words Jesus tells us of his coming on the last day. As he ascended into heaven from among the apostles, so will he come back.

But these words also signify the coming of the Lord at the end of each man's life. After all, when a person dies the world is ended for him.

Since you don't know if Christ will come today, tonight, tomorrow, or in a year or more, you must be vigilant. You must do as those who keep watch because they know the thief is coming but don't know the hour.

Be vigilant, be alert, be awake because there are many things that you can have doubts about on earth but one thing is certain — that one day you will die. This, for a Christian, means to meet Christ who will come.

Perhaps, like many others, you try to forget about death. You fear that moment and live as if it didn't exist. Rooting yourself always more in this earthly life, you say, 'death frightens me therefore it doesn't exist.' Yet that moment will come because Christ will certainly come. "Keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come." (Mt. 24:42)

If Jesus comes it means that this life passes. Therefore, you must not undervalue life, but rather give it its greatest importance. You must prepare yourself for that encounter with a worthy life.

On the morning of August 6, Paul VI didn't know and maybe didn't even imagine that that night at 9:40 the Lord would come. But he was ready. In his latest talks he often mentioned his forthcoming death. He was preparing himself and, therefore, his sudden death didn't take him by surprise. For John Paul I, the coming of Jesus was even more unforseeable.

"Keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come." (Mt. 24:42)

You, too, must be vigilant. Your life is not only a peaceful chain of events; it is also a struggle. The many, varied temptations such as sexual temptations, vanity, attachment to money, and violence are your first enemies.

If you are always vigilant you won't be taken by surprise. Those who love are always vigilant. Vigilance is a characteristic of love.

When one loves a person, one watches and waits on him unceasingly. Every moment spent away from the loved one is lived with him in mind.

This is how a spouse acts when she is preparing something for her husband who is away. She does everything for him. Then, when he arrives, having spent the day for him, she greets him joyfully.

When a mother is caring for a sick child, her thoughts are with him even as she rests.

The same is true for one who loves Jesus. He or she does everything for him whom she meets in the simple expression of his will in every moment, and whom she will meet one day when he comes in solemnity.

It was November 3, 1974.

At Santa Maria in South Brazil a religious convention for 250 young people had just ended. Most of them had come from the city of Pelotas. The first chartered bus left with 45 people who were joyfully singing. As they were traveling, some of the girls started to pray the sorrowful mysteries of the rosary asking Our Lady to help them to be faithful to God to the end of their life. Shortly after, the engine failed and the bus went out of control around a curve, turning over three times as it fell 150 feet. Six girls died. One who survived said, "I saw death but I was not afraid because God was there." Another one said, "When I realized that I couldn't move, because I was stuck in the debris, I looked at the stars and lying there among my friends who had died, I prayed. God was there with us."

The father of Carmen Regina, one of the girls who died, said that she used to repeat, "It is nice to die, Daddy, because you go to stay with Jesus."

"Keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come." (Mt. 24:42)

The girls of Pelotas loved and because they loved they were vigilant and when the Lord came, they met him with joy.

Chiara Lubich

EXPERIENCES

Each month a "Word of Life" appears in Living City or in its Supplement. The following are experiences that some of our readers shared with us in living the Word of Life.

THE OFFICE

Upon returning to my office after a nt vacation, I was anticipating the of meeting with my colleagues om I had not seen in three weeks. I nanged warm greetings with all, but my amazement, one man hardly ked at me. I wondered what had pened. Perhaps some problems in family or on the job?

The first day passed and still he ned very distant, and only with me. this point I began to wonder if I had nded him in some way and yet I re-nbered that before I left we had ex-nged good-byes and he seemed hap-

Since I had been absent from the ce I could not understand his atti-e towards me.

At this point the word of life that we e living that month came to my d, "Not my will but yours be done." ew that for me in this moment those ds meant that above everything else is was asking me to love him, with-expecting anything in return.

Unintentionally someone else in the ce, in speaking to me about some-g in our department, made me un-stand that the man had been in-med by the office manager of some nges that affected both him and me. parently these changes were in con-liction with what the manager had l me, and seeing as we were both on ation, nothing was done about them. The pieces began to fit together and new that I had to do my part to rec-ile this misunderstanding with this n. It was not an easy step to take, as elt that I had become his enemy. in the word of life came to mind and ent to him. I asked if I had done nething wrong which had made him ry. His remarks were cold and abu-. For a split second I thought this was crazy. I felt I had had enough of the whole thing, but when that second passed I apologized for anything that I had unintentionally done. I knew that in order to live the word of life to its fullest, I had to love him, without even an acceptance of my apology.

He didn't answer me and continued with his work. Humanly speaking it seemed that I had wasted my time, and yet this experience helped me to better understand the truth behind the words of the Gospel.

And I was ready to give my life for him in the next present moment and now.

M. K.

ACTS OF LOVE

Recently, I broke and sprained my foot while playing frisbee with some friends of mine. I was told I'd have to stay off my feet as much as possible. At first I was tempted to do whatever I could just to occupy my time. The word of life was "If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself and take up his cross every day and follow me." It hit me that in order to "take up my cross," I had to forget myself and concentrate more on the needs of the others around me. Since I could not move around a lot, my sister had to do most of the housework and since I seemingly couldn't help with anything, there was a little bit of a barrier between us. I decided to look harder for things that I could do. Right away I saw that I could help with sorting and folding the laundry. It was a small thing but, in working on it together with my sister, I saw that little by little we were re-establishing the rapport between us. A couple of days later, my sisters went for a ride to the lake. My parents had also gone somewhere and I was the only one in the house. Some hours later, I could hear my sisters going into the backyard to put their bikes away. I knew that their keys wouldn't open the back door and that they'd have to come around to the front door to get in. At first I thought that it would be okay if I stayed where I was since with my broken foot, they wouldn't really expect me to get up and open the door for them. Again, I remembered the word of life "If anyone wants to be a follower of mine..." I picked up my crutches and went as fast as I could to open the door for them.

K. R.

IN THE HOSPITAL

Last Friday, like other days, I walked into Mr. F's room at the hospital. He was paralyzed and I would try to help him do things for himself. He was lying in the dark, and did not show much delight in seeing me come in. I asked him if he'd like to get up into the chair, but he didn't respond. Patiently I explained why it would help him get stronger, and though he didn't respond, he watched me.

I put him in the chair and made him comfortable, and then asked him if he'd like some fruit. He didn't answer, but remembering the word of life, "Not my will but yours," I wanted to love him, not imposing my own will on him. I told him he had done a little better today, helping to move, and that I hoped one day soon he'd be able to move his hands himself in order to feed himself.

Again I asked him if he'd like a grape, and picking one, I gave it to him. He opened his mouth and ate it, looking at me. Then he reached out, took another grape, and gave it to me.

E. G.

Computer circuits versus eternity

I was born in a farming village in the south of Germany, near Munich. My parents had a small farm, about thirty acres. I had seven sisters and four brothers, and while we always had enough to eat, we were quite poor because the farm provided very little income.

My childhood was a happy one. We were a close family and the village in which we lived seemed to be an extension of the family. Since everyone was Catholic, also the parish and the community were one and the same. Many years went by before I discovered that there were people of different faiths as well as those who did not believe in God. In this sense I grew up in a simple and sheltered environment.

I was an adventuresome child which caused my parents to worry at times. I remember one experience when I was about five years old. I had decided to to go to the next village to buy a motor bike and without telling anyone I began walking. A couple of hours and three and a half miles later I arrived in the town. Tired and completely lost, I was soon crying as I wandered through the streets. Somebody noticed me and brought me to his home. He had a family with about five or six children and I quickly forgot my troubles as I played with them. I was so little that when they asked me where I lived, I could only say I belonged to my father. I didn't even know the name of my village. After a few hours my family realized I was missing and searched everywhere for me, with no luck. The family that I was with called the mayor's office and finally it was discovered where I belonged. For me, the biggest excitement of the day was the ride home on the man's motor bike. I did get quite a spanking from my father though. This was just one time when my desire for adventure got me into trouble.

Photo by Clara Cirasella

". . . I had decided to go to the next village to buy a motor bike and without telling anyone I began walking."

When I was in grammar school I remember being particularly impressed with the missionaries. I think I felt that God was also calling me, but I didn't give it too much thought. I went on to a vocational school to become an electrician. "Just let me finish my apprenticeship and then I'll answer your call," I told God. But after my apprenticeship I thought it would be best to work for a few years, so I said no again to God. The question of God's call kept coming back to me, but I continued to put it off. I went on to college to become an electrical engineer. However, there was always a conflict inside of me between the ambition to learn, to become somebody, and the desire to follow him.

When I received my degree I began working as an electrical engineer in a research laboratory in Munich. This was a big change from the sheltered Catholic world I grew up in. Here I met people who had left the Church, and who constantly challenged my beliefs. They led me to the point where finally, at 27 years of age, I had to ask myself what my faith really consisted of. What had I done with it? Did I really believe or was I just faking it? I remembered the times when I had felt the call of God and had not responded. I could no longer continue living in such an undecided way.

I began to think seriously about my future and especially about the next life. "What will I say to Jesus when I meet him face to face?" I asked myself. He would ask me, "What did you do for my kingdom in your lifetime?" And I would have to tell him that I designed computer circuits. It seemed so insignificant to have this as the only ideal in my life when compared to eternity. This understanding made me change my attitude and begin looking for a way to give my life to God in the Church. Not knowing which was to be my way, I decided to begin by studying theology. I spent five years learning Greek and Latin and fulfilling the other requirements. Since my previous education was totally science oriented I was not well prepared for this new course of study. I found it very difficult to get back into the routine of school, and I had to make a new choice of God everyday.

would feel very uneasy whenever I
l the Gospel because it seemed clear
ne that I was not really living it. I
hadn't found the way of giving my
totally to Christ. One day I was
ling the passage where Jesus says
whatever we do to the least of his
thers we do to him. It struck me in
ery strong way. I decided at this
nt to use my vacation time for God.
ent to help out in the hospitals be-
se I thought that the "least" might
those who were mentally or physi-
y ill. None of my classmates saw the
d to live the words of Jesus in such a
ctical way. I wondered if I were on
right track.

At this point one of my friends gave
a copy of "Neue Stadt," (the German
ion of the Focolare Movement mag-
e). As I read through it I felt excite-
nt growing inside. The life expressed
he articles, seemed to be what I had
n searching for all these years. I
ght a subscription immediately be-
se it contained such an important
sage, one of love. The things I had
d to do before had seemed so strange
en I didn't see others living that way.
w I had found a whole community of
ple living the Gospel in a concrete
. Reading the magazine was like
ding the Gospel in the applied ver-
, and it struck me very deeply.
Soon after I came into personal con-
with the Focolare, and again it was
otally new reality. I was strongly
acted by something I couldn't put
finger on at that time. Whenever I
nt to the focolare center I would
e feeling renewed from within. Fi-
y, after many contacts, I realized
I was attracted by the presence of
ist among those people. Seeing how
y loved one another, how they tried
do only the will of God, and how
y chose to love Jesus in his greatest
fering of abandonment on the cross,
vinced me that this was the life to
ch God was calling me.

This was how I entered the Focolare.
as been twelve years now, and it is
a fascinating, growing experience.
ave found peace and joy which have
ome more and more profound over
years. Of course there were also
ny difficulties. To love one another
Christ has loved us certainly means to
to ourselves by losing our ideas, our
of doing things, and so on. This is
easy because the "old man" (1) in
s very strong. It was a big adventure
for me to learn how to lose any selfish attachments to my own will, in order to do the will of God and reach unity with my brothers.

I spent my first year in the focolare of Munich, and then went to Loppiano (2) for two years. In that little city where the only law is mutual love, I experienced something of the kingdom of God on earth. After two years in Italy I came to the United States.

When I arrived eight years ago, I had a hard time finding a job in my field of electronic engineering because of government cutbacks. Since I had no American work experience and a limited mastery of English, few companies would even give me an interview. I finally got a job in a small German radio repair shop in New York.

During the year that I worked there I had a lot of contact with customers. I wanted to try and love them in the way that Jesus would have if he had been working in the shop instead of me. This meant to listen to them, to try to do my best in fixing their equipment and to answer their many questions patiently.

After a year I moved to Boston. I knew I had to find a job more in line with my professional background, but after a lot of useless searching I became discouraged. One day I was looking at the want ads and I noticed a very small ad for an engineer. I didn't even want to bother sending a resume at first, but then I put my trust in God, and picked up the phone. I told the personnel manager that I was trained as an engineer and I was looking for somebody with the courage to give me a chance to work in my field. He asked me where I was from and I told him. He was of German descent and we talked for the next half hour about the trips he had taken to his father's hometown and so on. It was a very nice conversation and we almost forgot about my reason for calling. At the end he told me to send him a resume, saying he would like to help me. Two days later he called me and said, "Guess what—the man who will interview you attended the same college in Germany that you did!"

I got the job and for two years worked with top notch professionals who helped me to learn a great deal. For me it was a beautiful experience to see how the love of God can overcome all difficulties.

After two years my contract there expired, and I got a job with a research company. I have been with this company for almost four years, trying my best to live the Gospel with my colleagues, and do a good job. The two things go hand in hand. You cannot do a poor job and then pretend to live according to the Gospel. I made many friends and eventually some of them met the Focolare Movement.

I was promoted several times. Two years ago the president of the company wanted to make me chief engineer of the electronics department. Knowing about my involvement with the Focolare, he asked me what I thought. I told him he would be taking a risk because I might have to leave Boston at any time. I remember thinking to myself that my career was going out the window, but for me the important thing was to do the will of God, not to make a career in electronics. A week later he announced my promotion. He took the risk.

At the end of the last year, when I I found out that I had to come to New York, I was relieved to think that it would not be a total surprise for my boss. Still it took me almost a week to gather the courage to approach him with the news. Before I could tell him about it he started talking about his plans to expand the company and make me the head of a new department. I had to tell him that I was very sorry but that I would be moving to New York. He answered me in a way that I never expected, "I know you are a man of God — and if it is the will of God for you to go to New York, then it is also the will of God for this company to let you go."

Siegfried Hitzler

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1) "...put aside your old self with its past deeds," Col 3,9.

2) Loppiano — A city near Florence Italy built by the Focolare Movement which is a full and complete expression of the spirituality lived by its inhabitants.

by Gabri Fallacara

BRIDGES OF UNITY

The arrival of Metropolitan Melitone of Calcedonia at the Mariapolis Center in Rocca di Papa greeted by Chiara Lubich and others of the Focolare Movement. On the right (behind) Bishop Torrella, and on the left, Metropolitan Bartolomeo of Philadelphia, Western Turkey.

When Patriarch Athenagoras died, many wondered what course of action his successor would take in regard to ecumenism. In a recently published book, Jean Claude Darrigaud, a well known television reporter from France, wrote: " 'Will the successor of Athenagoras make the late Patriarch's passion for unity his own?' This is the question which Chiara Lubich asked herself while en route to Istanbul where she had been invited to meet with the new Ecumenical Patriarch Demetrius I. Chiara later affirmed that on seeing Demetrius I she immediately recognized in him all the graces of the Patriarch of the Orient. She felt that ecumenical dialogue was proceeding fully and fruitfully."

Judging from recent events, that dialogue is ablaze with hope. On July 1 of this year, Metropolitan Melitone of Calcedonia, Dean of the Holy Synod in the Phanar (the residence of the Patriarch of Constantinople), concluded his stay in Rome with a visit to the Mariapolis Center in Rocca di Papa. He had come to Rome, heading a delegation

n the Ecumenical Patriarchate and
resenting Patriarch Demetrius I, in
er to pay a visit to Pope Paul VI.
In recent years, it has become custo-
y for a delegation from the Ecume-
al Patriarchate to participate in cere-
nies honoring St. Peter, in Rome,
le a delegation from the Catholic
urch travels to Istanbul each year to
end ceremonies honoring St. Andrew.
Pope Paul VI received the Orthodox
egation in a private audience on the
rning of July 1. He spoke to them
h deep conviction: "We are happy to
ow that the two commissions respon-
le for preparing the theological dia-
ue between the Catholic and Ortho-
x Churches have already accomplished
great deal. The fact that the coordi-
ting committee, composed of repre-
ntatives of the two commissions, has

*tropolitan Melitone
th Chiara Lubich
they leave the
riapolis Center.*

eady met and begun to work, clearly
ows that progress has been made and
at there is a strong desire to conclude
s preparatory phase as soon as possible
that a true theological dialogue may
gin."
In this context, Metropolitan Meli-
ne's visit to the Center of the Focolare
vement (of which Patriarch Athena-
ras wished to be considered a member)

On Saturday July 1st, Paul VI received the Metropolitan of Calcedonia, Metropolitan Melitone, Dean of the Holy Synod in the Phanar in a private audience. The Metropolitan Melitone offered the Pope an artistic chalice. On June 29th, he had assisted at a Mass celebrated by the Pope in St. Peter's on the feast of SS. Peter and Paul.

acquired particular significance. This visit was the occasion of a great celebration to honor Melitone, who was accompanied by Bishop Torrella, the Vice-President of the Secretariat for Christian Unity.

Chiara Lubich, who had visited Melitone at his home in Istanbul in November of 1977, welcomed him to the Mariapolis Center that afternoon, together with Igino Giordani, director of Centro Uno, (1) and other members of the Movement. A group of about 200 married Focolarini, who had come from all over the world to attend a series of meetings on the spirituality of the Movement, were also present that day. Their lively interest and evident affection bore witness to the fact that the unity of sister churches has become a concern of lay people, as well as of the ecclesiastical hierarchy.

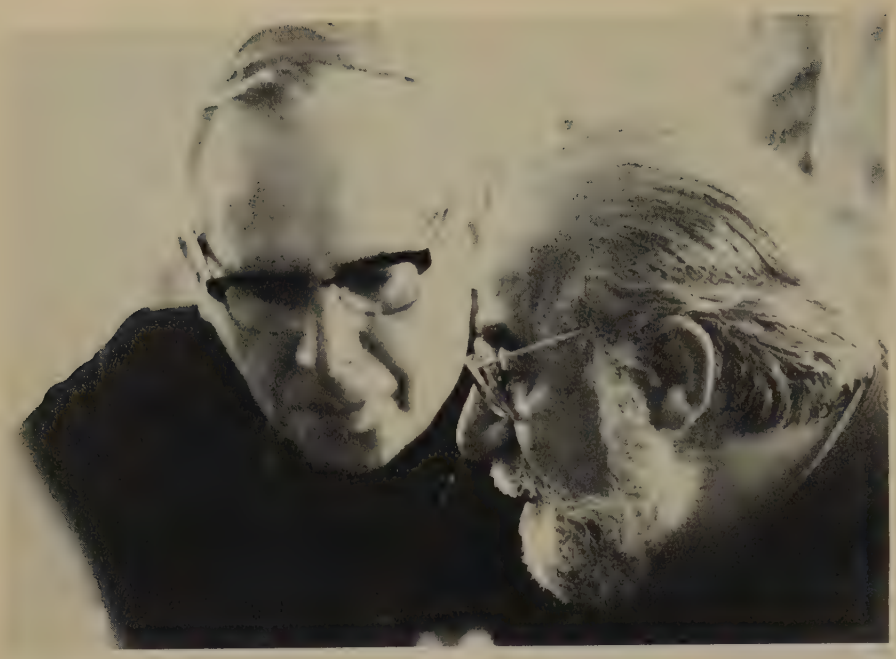
Melitone introduced the members of the Orthodox delegation to the members of the Movement. He had been accompanied by Metropolitan Bartolomeo of Philadelphia, the Archmandrite Spiridione, Deacon Melitone Karas and two guests, the Orthodox Bishop of Crotia, Gennadios Zervos, and Dr. Pheidas, a professor at the University of Athens and director of the Greek Cultural Institute.

Metropolitan Melitone said that he had come in order to bring Chiara Lubich the special blessing of Patriarch Demetrius I. He then expressed his appreciation for the willingness of those in the Movement to build a Mariapolis Center in Italy which would be concerned primarily with fostering contact between Catholics and members of the Orthodox Church who want to increase their mutual knowledge of the spiritual wealth of the Eastern and Western traditions. This project had been proposed by Metropolitan Emilianos Timiadis, of the Ecumenical Council of Churches, after he had participated in a convention of Orthodox and Catholics sponsored by Centro Uno last May.

A special luncheon for the fifty guests present had been prepared at the Mariapolis Center. The meal was shared in an atmosphere in which the word "agape" acquired its full significance. "It is beautiful to sit around one table," Metropolitan Melitone commented afterwards, "as God himself desires. The first indication of his wish can be found in the manifestation of the Most Holy Trinity when God, the triune God, visited the tents of Abraham in the form of angels and ate the bread offered by Abraham and Sarah. What a miracle. What a mystery this is. We cannot fathom its depth, yet it is one of the most important mysteries in the history of God's relationship with man..."

"In the New Testament, we also find God's wish to share food with man expressed in a powerful manner: We all

(1) The "Centro Uno" is a central office for the ecumenical activities of the Movement.



Mariapolis Center, Rocca di Papa, Italy. Metropolitan Melitone and Bishop Torella, Vice-President of the Secretariat for Christian Unity.

remember that before his passion the Lord told his disciples, 'I have longed to eat this Passover meal with you.' 'I have longed...,' the desire of God to eat with man. The powerful desire of God! As an affirmation of this desire he has given us the Eucharist in which one table is shared by man and God."

After lunch, Melitone and the other guests entered a large auditorium where the Gen Verde Band, an international musical group, presented a program of songs and dances. The gospel message, expressed in these modern means of communications, enhanced the atmosphere of mutual hospitality. Some young girls from the Philippines presented Melitone with a beautiful garland of fresh flowers, welcoming him in accordance with their native customs.

At the conclusion, Metropolitan Melitone spoke to all who were present. All those who were in the hall were struck by his deeply spiritual tone and by the way in which he expressed sacred realities in human terms, a particular sensitivity which the Eastern Christian Church has preserved over the centuries.

Among other things, Melitone shared some of his impressions of the Focolare Movement, which, he said, could be characterized in a few words: "The word 'focolare', meaning hearth, the word 'movement' and the word 'love'. The first word, 'focolare', is an important part of man's life. Since the earliest times, fire has been man's refuge from darkness of night and from the cold. Where there is fire, where there is a hearth, mencan come together and speak with one another. We need a focolare," he continued, "to provide light and warmth, to hold living fire. If you are a Focolare, a true focolare, it is because your hearth is full of living fire.

The second word is 'movement', which means life. It is not something static but, rather, dynamic. This shows its relationship to fire. Fire is not static, it is always spreading; it is alive!

"Therefore, guard this movement; guard the fire in this focolare and continue to love as you are loving now. Love is truly the greatest Christian virtue. God and love are one and the same. The two cannot be separated. One cannot understand God without love, just as one cannot understand love without God.

"I will tell you something you may not know. Thirteen years ago, when Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras decided to remove the mutual excommunications between Rome and Constantinople they each prepared a document with no knowledge of what the other's would contain. I, myself, had the great historical privilege to receive the pontifical "brief" from the hands of Paul VI in St. Peter's. On the same day, in Istanbul, the Pope's delegate received the document from the hands of Athenagoras at the Phanar. Both documents began with the same word, 'love', and it is along this road of love that the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church have initiated their contacts with one another.

"Today I bring you good news: we are about to begin a dialogue on doctrine, a theological dialogue."

With these words, Melitone concluded his brief talk. Unmistakeable joy was evident on the faces of all present. It was apparent that all of them were witnessing an historic moment in the history of the Church. ●

In accordance with their custom, a Philippine focolarina of the Gen Verde band places a garland of flowers on Metropolitan Melitone as a symbol of warm welcome for a guest of honor.

The universal purpose of created things

by Joseph Zanghi

In August, 1977, the Pontifical Commission on Justice and Peace published a document relating to the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, which has been in session since 1973. In this document the Church clarifies and deepens its doctrine on the use of created things and on private property. It is a fundamental document.

Today, more than at any other time, an immense reserve of riches is being discovered in the sea. The only question is how best to take advantage of it. How can the inevitable competition among nations be regulated? One possible solution could be that of maintaining the traditional concept of the high seas as "res nullius" — that is, no one's property. But is this the most beneficial solution?

At one time, when science had not reached its present stage of development and the sea seemed to be an inexhaustible reservoir, this answer could have been feasible. However, it is not valid any longer because today space is limited while both the means of exploitation and the need for raw materials have increased enormously.

In this situation, neutrality of the high seas (which do not belong to any maritime nation as an extension of territory or national sovereignty) would constitute an added benefit to the richest and best provided nations; it would multiply sources of conflict and transform the search for marine riches into real devastation. Poverty would not be alleviated, and in time the ecological balance of this planet would be jeopardized as well.

An alternative solution could be that of extending the marine sovereignties of costal nations. Costal nations have already laid claim to 200 miles of territorial waters, and in this way one third of all ocean space (the most useful part of it) will come under the exclusive national sovereignty of costal countries.

Yet not even this solution is a good one. The pontifical document explains this very well: it would introduce and extend rivalries among nations. Furthermore it would benefit only costal nations. What about the others?

A solution for mankind

In reality, "both attitudes and the development of theory are lagging behind actual events" (1). Yet there are new worthwhile prospectives: "In this convergence of human need and human potentiality, mankind's permanent duty to provide for his own development is given a uniquely historic opportunity of progressing by peaceful means on a space as yet largely unaffected by the dissensions which have arisen in the course of human history on land, and to do this with the experience and the means which should ensure that this unhoped-for reserve is not irresponsibly squandered away" (2).

Consequently, the Church has made its own the declaration of the 23rd ordinary session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, that the high seas are "the common heritage of mankind" (3). These words contain a revolutionary invitation, that ocean space should be "reserved for peaceful purposes" (4). If these words are understood in depth, they imply "an evolution of the idea of national sovereignty" (5).

It is worth noting both the boldness of these statements and their implicit invitation to take another look at the relationships among nations and improve their moral basis.

Furthermore, in this way the wealth of the oceans would benefit all, especially the poorest nations. "A change in the traditional concept of developmental aid takes shape" (6). Not only would financial benefits be shared, "but also those derived from joint management and the transfer of technologies" (7). This constitutes a great step forward in the direction of real equality among nations.

Man's deliberations and mentality would be stimulated by "new" solutions. In fact, by coming together over such a huge task, mankind could be induced to work for "the establishment of an original framework in which the solidarity of the human family would be concretely expressed and become a means of new progress" (8).

Because, "once it has been tried on the oceans — a space privileged by its novelty and extent — the concept of the common heritage of mankind could well be extended to other areas.

"We thus have here what is undoubtedly a new and innovative idea" (9).

What about private ownership?

Some people will surely ask themselves this question when reading the document of the Pontifical Commission, almost as though the idea of a common heritage of mankind is (as it is often presented or at least understood) "purely and simply antithetical to that of appropriation by individual states, and destined gradually to supersede it" (10).

In order to shed light on this question, the document makes reference to the official doctrine of the Catholic Church on the "particular appropriation of goods." (It seems to me that this definition is more complete than the other — "private ownership." It is more dynamic and takes a more social and less individualistic viewpoint.)

What does the Church have in mind when it speaks of private ownership? The document makes reference to very recent texts, "Gaudium et Spes" and "Populorum Progressio" in which there is a clarity of exposition we do not always find in earlier documents. What is the fundamental point of the Church's doctrine on the use of goods?

"God intended the earth and all that it contains for the use of every human being and people. Thus, as all men follow justice and unite in charity, created goods should abound for them on a reasonable basis" (Gaudium et Spes no. 69 par. 1).

"Populorum Progressio" (no. 22) comments further: "All other rights whatsoever, including those of property and free commerce, are to be subordinated to this principle. They should not hinder, but on the contrary, favor its application. It is a grave and urgent social duty to redirect them to their primary finality."

Consequently, since goods are intrinsically destined to all peoples, this "universal purpose of created things is both a 'given' and a task" (11). Therefore, it is a calling which is becoming always more a reality in correspondence with that which God wants.

In this sense, particular appropriations of goods "in various historic forms, enable men to exercise their freedom in a field in which they can develop their personality, manage and multiply goods in a responsible fashion, imbue them with humanity by the work they put into them" (12). The same applies (in proper proportions) to intermediate collectivities and states.

This is but one aspect of the outlook we must have regarding the use of created things. In fact, at the basis of the concept of particular appropriation of goods is the reality of the individual person with his unique characteristics.

But the individual is called to join with others in a relationship of full union, in which each one is himself "with" the others (not in opposition to them). It is like being "one in the other," fulfilling on a human plane that reciprocal immanence which is proper of the Blessed Trinity. The whole earth and all that is in it is involved in this adventure.

The common heritage

Therefore, the individual is himself "in the others," but he remains "himself." As it relates to our topic, this means that the particular appropriation of goods concerns the person as an individual, whereas goods seen as common heritage concern the person as part of a community. These are two inseparable and coexistent parts of man's personality. Consequently, common heritage and particular appropriations must be considered together and not set one against the other.

This is possible because the idea of "a universal purpose of created things," encompasses both, the particular appropriation of goods and the common heritage. Guided by this principle, we can work toward the reorganization of society in accordance with God's plan and man's calling. In order to accomplish this, however, we need both new structures and a new mentality.

What is to be done?

"Faced with the radical repudiation of the very principle of private ownership (individual or social) of the means of production, the Church has, in the past, been led to emphasize the principle's permanent value..." (13). But this has had an added effect which was undesirable: "...many people, including Christians, have preferred to retain only the aspect of defense of their private property, ignoring the more fundamental principle involved" (14), (that of the universal purpose of created things). Furthermore, some have misinterpreted the language of the Church.

"The result is that, by some in good faith (unenlightened), by many in bad faith, the Church's teaching has been, and still is, brought forth to justify an existing property regime as 'natural' in the sense of 'permanent and inviolable.'

"In actual fact, the Church's doctrine of property entails the need to constantly re-examine by the democratic procedures envisaged, the existing property regimes, and to adapt them to the human and social finality they ought to serve.

"The real question is, thus, the following: does the existing regime, and the development it is undergoing, still enable all men to exercise their 'natural' (hence valid for all) right to have access in one form or another to some power over things, a power to be exercised in responsible freedom? Or, on the contrary, does the existing regime and its inner logic lead to the exclusion of the majority from such a perspective? And do they not lead, moreover, by a new abuse, to concentrate in the hands of a minority not only the responsibilities for property, but also all social and political powers" (15)?

I have quoted at length because it seems to me that these words are fundamental and quite explicit. They show great awareness of the developments taking place in contemporary culture and suggest that we go beyond the existing structures, in order to reach new Christian solutions.

We must all "convert", therefore, in order to give our contribution to the reorganization of universal society.

We must evaluate contemporary events in the light of the Gospel, recognizing all that is good in them without preconceived ideas. We must love man as God loves him. We must not be content until we have reached the goal.

■

1. Pontifical Commission "Iustitia et Pax", On the Conference on the Law of the Sea: The Universal Purpose of Created Things (Vatican City), chap. 2, par. 4d.
2. Ibid., chap. 1, par. 1.
3. Ibid., chap. 1, par. 4.
4-5. Ibid., chap. 1, par. 4a.
6-7. Ibid., chap. 1, par. 4b.
8. Ibid., chap. 1, par. 4c.
9. Ibid., chap. 1, par. 4e.
10. Ibid., chap. 3, par. 1.
11-12. Ibid., chap. 3, par. 3b.
13-14. Ibid., chap. 4, par. 2.
15. Ibid., chap. 4, par. 3.

FAMILY LIFE

Weakened family life is one of the greatest social ills of our time.
The "New Family" Movement has as its aim to bring the Focolare spirit of unity into family life, so that each family will be deeply united within itself and with other families.

PRESENT MOMENTS

Pat: "As a parent I often wondered how I could teach my children how to love each other. On one occasion when I was pregnant, I was bathing my three year old daughter. Leaning over the bathtub was difficult and it was becoming the most tiring part of the day. The thought came to me that I should explain to her what was going on so that she could love too. I told her, ' you know, I'm very tired and you have to help mommy because I can't do this by myself when you're playing.' She tried. She really sat still and helped me. It was just a matter of asking her to do it.

"There was a time when our 5 year old and 3 year old would compete with each other over every little thing. Every time we would give something to one of them he or she would rush to tell the other one who would then get upset. One time I was giving something to one of the kids. I had only one so I was giving it to Claire since I knew she liked it. As soon as she had it in her hand, she was rushing to tell Jeffrey, 'Look what I have. Mommy gave me this.' I stopped her and said, 'You know, you're going to make him feel sad by telling him that.' She understood and stopped. This experience helped them both to realize that they should try to love each other. And in fact, this behavior didn't continue."

Ken: "Several months ago Pat went to New York to visit friends, and I stayed home to take care of the children. It wasn't easy, and after about three days, they were really getting on my nerves. They hadn't been out of the house very much, and it seemed like they were constantly screaming at each other. I was getting very tired, and toward the end of one particular day I remember trying to feed the baby in the kitchen. The living room was a mess. The children's toys were everywhere and they had made tents with their pillows and blankets. I was thinking that I would clean up after the children were in bed, but I knew it would be a big job. My frustrations were building up inside and I could sense that I could explode. Then I remembered that what I really wanted to do was to love, that is, to do everything as an act of love. I decided to ask my children to help clean up instead of shouting at them to do it. After feeding the baby I put him into his pajamas and returned to the living room. To my surprise the room was spotless. The children were playing together and I realized immediately that in trying to love them, they had loved me in return. A beautiful bond was established that night between me and my children."

Pat: "I have a tendency to want to do too much in one day. Since we have three small children there is a limit to what I can do each day, outside the taking care of the needs for that day. My plans, however, are usually beyond what I can do.

"Once, I started a project of sewing some things for the children's room. I usually started it at night, after they were asleep. One evening I worked pretty late. The next day I had the impression that nothing was really getting done, and that I wasn't loving the children in the way that I know I can love them. I knew that my being tired had a lot to do with this situation. I was beginning to get preoccupied with my project. At one point I realized that I wasn't living in the present moment. Instead I was looking forward to that project which I was hoping to finish.

"When I went to Mass that evening, I remember praying to Jesus, 'Help me, because I am letting my worries control me, instead of living for you, trying to do your will.' On my way home I felt very clearly that I needed to put aside my plans for that night, and rest. It wasn't easy for me, but I understood that in this moment it was the will of God for me to rest. So, I folded up everything and put it away.

"The following day went beautifully. There was time for some sewing in the morning because my daughter was visiting her friends and the baby was taking a nap. Then again in the afternoon, I worked for another hour on the

project. I couldn't believe how quickly Jesus had answered my prayer for help.

"This experience helped me to realize again that if I put love as the first thing of importance in my life, and this means trying to do the will of God in the present moment, then everything will find its place."

Ken: "Recently, when I returned home from work, I noticed that the house next to us was empty. I remembered that our neighbors mentioned to us that they were moving but I had lost track of time. I remember thinking of an experience of someone who had realized too late that the person next to them was a brother to be loved. I too felt the same way, as if I didn't really know them.

"Since they had moved out completely I realized that I wouldn't have any chance to correct this situation. I felt as if I had failed in loving my neighbor. It reminded me of Jesus Forsaken, who must have felt as a failure too, when he died on the cross. But Jesus didn't give up. He continued to love. So, this experience became like a springboard for me. I realized that starting in this moment I can take advantage of all the opportunities that come each day to love my neighbor."

Pat: "Living the ideal of unity has made life in our family very beautiful. I often wish that I could share it with all my neighbors. But, it seemed that the opportunity never came, and I was beginning to feel frustrated about it. But I know that the best way to spread the Ideal is to live it. All the children who come to my door each day are also neighbors to be loved. I said to myself: 'I really have to love each one.'

"On one occasion, a little boy came to ask if the children could come out to play. It happened that they were not well that day and I had decided to keep them in. But, instead of just sending him away, I began to talk to him, ask him about his family, and then mentioned to him that perhaps they would be able to go out the following day.

"On another occasion, one of the children came to the door and asked if he could ride one of the bikes that we keep in our garage. My first impulse was to tell him that I was busy, but then it occurred to me that this is my brother and I have to try to love him. Then I realized that all the children had a bike to ride except him. I went out and although it was difficult I carried the bike out for him. The smile on all their faces brought a great peace inside of me."

Ken: "Whenever Pat and I entertain it becomes a big agony for me. Instead of living the present moment I start worrying: will the company have a good time, will the house be cleaned in time, will the children behave themselves. I begin to lose myself in the problems that might or might not come about, instead of living the present moment, and trying to love in the present moment.

"At a recent holiday, we invited some friends who had three children the same ages as ours. The parents of our friends also came, so we had a large group. I began to fall into my usual pattern of worrying when Pat said, 'Let's just remember to love and live in the present moment. Then everything will get done.' And it did. We worked together the day before, getting the cleaning and shopping completely done. Then, Sunday came, the day that our company was coming. I began to get worried again, but I immediately stopped and reminded myself of that small pact that Pat and I had made the day before. At Mass that morning, our whole family was all together. I remember saying to Jesus that the whole point of these preparations was to love him in our neighbor. This gave me a deep peace. When our friends arrived we were well prepared, and the day went really well."

Pat and Ken Huckabay

new city press, new york

anne marie zanzucchi

my child and god

Religious Education in the Family

The method of religious education explored in this book is rooted in reality — in the experience of the author and a group of parents whom she interviewed. They speak honestly and freely about the difficulties and the successes they have encountered in introducing their children to God, to prayer, to Jesus and Mary, to Scripture, to examination of conscience, to the Sacraments, to suffering and to death.

The goal of this method is to contribute to the formation of a human being who believes in the love of God and who has learned to love.

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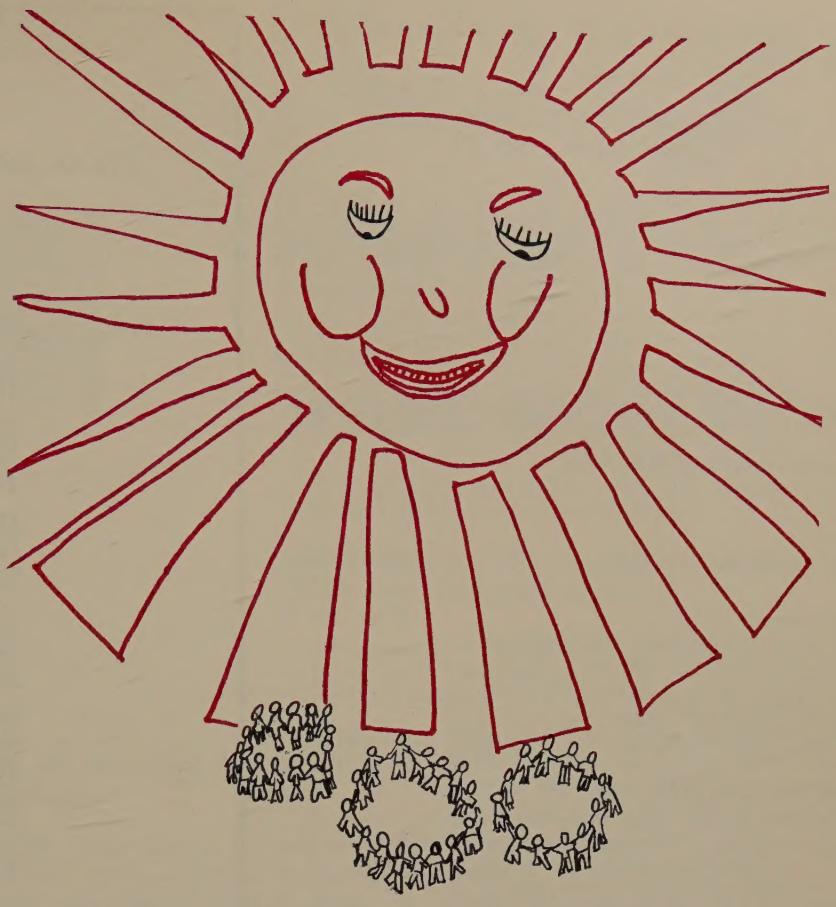
THE VERY YOUNG AND THE GOSPEL



The new generations of the Focolare Movement form another Movement or, better, three movements: the Gen 2, the Gen 3 and the Gen 4 Movements, divided according to their various age groups. "Gen" stands for new generation.

The following are experiences of some Gen 3 girls.

One day I was playing with my friends. We were playing "brother and sister." I didn't get my turn so I was going to yell: "Hey, I didn't get my turn." Then I thought to myself "no", it wouldn't be the will of God, it wouldn't be fair to other people if I yelled out; they were waiting for their turn also. So I thought it would be the will of God if I waited, so I did the will of God.

Michelle, age 9

One day at school I was studying for my Science test. My friend, who was sitting next to me, was talking to me. I was getting mad but I knew that it was the will of God to love her in that moment. I had studied the night before for the test, so I talked to her and she was happy.

Lisa, age 12

On Friday at school everyone was talking and the teacher was waiting for us to be quiet. And I wanted to talk too but Jesus inside of me was saying not to talk, to do the will of God and to love the teacher.

Irene, age 8

Yesterday my toe started hurting. Then later it started hurting even more. At that time I was helping a friend. I wanted to ask her if she wouldn't mind it if I went to rest. I wanted to love and I told myself, "Don't ask; love Jesus Forsaken (1) and help her." So I didn't ask if I could rest and I said, "I am happy that I am suffering like you Jesus."

Maureen, age 11

Tonight when we were getting ready for prayers, I asked my mother if I could do a dance that my sisters and I had practiced. She said that we didn't have time. I was going to get mad because we practiced so hard but I didn't, and I kept loving, I said yes and continued to love. It surprised us when my mother said to do the dance. It all went well and we keep trying to live like this.

Christina, age 9

When I go to school, since I am a different race than the others (I am Asian), sometimes the kids call me names, like "Chinese girl, etc." One day at school they were taking our picture and everyone had beautiful clothes. I was the only one dressed in just plain pants. The other kids began to make fun of me; one of them said, "Chinese girl, so poor she doesn't even have a dress to wear." I was so mad that I wanted to cry and fight with them.

But I knew that this was Jesus Forsaken and I had to embrace him because I have chosen to love him for the rest of my life. I didn't answer back and I tried to love her more and then little by little she stopped making fun of me and became my friend.

Editha, age 12

One day we had Banking in school. John and I were the bankers and he didn't know what to do. My teacher asked me to teach him. I was about to ask her why she couldn't do it herself but I loved Jesus in her and explained it to him. He didn't understand very well at first, but I was patient and he learned fast.

Edie, age 9

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(1) Jesus, when on the cross he cried, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

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